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ART. X. — *La Suisse Allemande et l'Ascension du Moench.*

Par Mme. la Comtesse DORA D'ISTRIA. Paris : Joël Cherbuliez. 1856. 4 vols. 12mo. pp. 1432.

THE author of this work on German Switzerland is in many particulars a remarkable person. Her pseudonyme of "La Comtesse D'Istria" hides a higher social rank than that of Countess. Her true title is that of Princess Koltzoff Massalsky, to which her lineage might also enable her to prefix the nobler name of Ghika. In this race of Ghika talent is hereditary, and liberal opinions are known as among its eccentricities ; but the daughter of the Grand Ban Michael, and the niece of the Hospodar Alexander seems to have inherited in enlarged measure the liberalism and the ability of the ruling house of Roumania. The natural gifts of a scion of that house have been developed in her case by an education singularly free and complete, and such as probably the daughter of no other European potentate has received in this age. She is equally versed in the ancient classic tongues, and in the leading dialects of modern Europe ; can write with facility and grace in Italian, French, German, and Russian, not less than in her own Wallachian, or in the Romaic speech of her tutor, the famous Pappadopoulos ; is familiar with history and legend, with science and political philosophy ; and in the precocity of her genius, as well as the variety of her acquirements, fairly rivals the unfortunate daughter of the English Dorset. Ascham could find Lady Jane Grey reading Plato in the Greek when the rest of the household were hunting in the forest ; but it seems to us more worthy of wonder that the young Helen Ghika should dare, at the age of fifteen, to attempt a translation of the Iliad into German. Such tastes are rare in kings' houses. The married life of the Princess Massalsky has been diversified by various fortunes, which have enabled her to become personally acquainted with the principal nations and regions of Europe. She has lived in Russia and in France, in Turkey and in Belgium, and is able to describe from personal knowledge the scenery and manners of most parts of the Continent. Her present and favorite residence, however, is Switzerland ; and

on the banks of the Aar she still pursues her literary labors. She has published several works, as "Monastic Life in the Oriental Church," "The Roumans and the Papacy," and "The Heroes of Roumania"; but her most elaborate and characteristic production is this upon German Switzerland. Here the vigor of her style, the fulness of her knowledge, the fervor of her religious sympathies, and the force of her patriotism, appear in the boldest relief.

The plan of the work is peculiar. It is neither a connected history, nor a book of travels, nor merely a series of sketches, but an ingenious combination of history, sketch, and travel, interspersed with frequent biographical notices and æsthetic and polemic dissertations. The principal cities of German Switzerland are taken successively as the centres of observation and remark, suggesting historical reminiscences and appropriate reflections. "Constance" and its lake bring before us the tragedy of Huss, and the story of martyrdom in the fifteenth century. "Schaffhausen" is the text of an eloquent digression on "the battles of liberty" and on the historians of Switzerland, Müller and Zschokke. "Zurich" calls up the forms of Zwingli, Bodmer, Lavater, Pestalozzi, Escher of the Linth, and Strauss, and the causes identified with these names. "Lucerne" and the Lake of the Four Cantons, of course, introduce the discussion of the religions of Switzerland. "Berne" is the heading of a series of chapters on Mysticism, Popular Romance, Communism, Political Organization, Fellenberg and his School, Haller and Science, Zimmerman and Moral Philosophy, Rodolph of Erlach, and the Aristocracy. The lake and town of "Thun" exhibit the legends and superstitions, the songs and music, of the Swiss people. "Grindelwald" allows a digression upon preaching and preachers, with special notice of Zollikofer, while "Bâle" repeats to us the story of Erasmus and Holbein, of medical, mathematical, exegetical, and theological learning, and, finally, of Protestant missions and the Roman Propaganda.

The execution of this curious and comprehensive plan is, on the whole, excellent. The style of Madame D'Istria (for we prefer to use the musical pseudonyme which she borrows from her favorite river, rather than the name of Massalsky, as hard

to write as it is to speak) has a rare strength, energy, and sharpness, — the qualities, indeed, of masculine writing. She has been accused by some, and not without reason, of imitating George Sand. Though no land could offer to a writer so many temptations to sentimental description, to rapturous outbursts of wonder and amazement, she restrains these most rigidly, and even disappoints us by the extremeness of her reserve. She has comparatively little to say upon the subject which is most intimately associated in the minds of most persons with the name of Switzerland. Nine persons out of ten who visit that land visit it for the scenery, and think of nothing while they are there but mountains, valleys, ravines, cascades, lakes, and glaciers. In the glory of this scenery, the men and the annals of the land are forgotten. Only those legends are remembered which are directly connected with the romantic features of the country, such as the story of William Tell, — now, alas! resolved by provoking critics, Madame D'Istria consenting, into a myth. Switzerland, in fact, in the minds of most men, is sequestered to this exhibition of Alps. Other nations have grand mountain scenery, but none at once so various, so condensed, and so accessible. The Himalayas may be twice as high, and Ararat may have a wider outlook, but it happens to very few to reach the Armenian peak or the Indian range. These lie away from the track of travel. The Lebanon hills are better known, and modern romance has done something to turn the feet of tourists towards the mountains of Norway. But there is only a small part of the year when it is comfortable to travel in these regions, and the scenery alone does not yet draw a tithe of the crowds who frequent the paths of the Bernese Oberland. The Alps of Switzerland offer to the most delicate an unrivalled spectacle of mountain magnificence, with scarcely any loss of comfort. There are good inns, with featherbeds, on the summits of the high mountains. One may breakfast on eggs and bacon in the English hotels at Interlachen, and dine without fatigue on the top of the Wengern Alp, right opposite to the avalanches of the Jungfrau. Three or four days' journey by rail will enable tourists from most of the capitals of Europe to come in front of views which baffle the imagination by their magnificence. Nowhere else can so

many, so celebrated, and so imposing mountains be seen so conveniently by so many persons, and in so short a time. The consequence is, that this sole interest of the Alps absorbs all other interests, and one who writes about Switzerland is expected to make this the principal topic. We are afraid, therefore, that many of the readers of the Countess D'Istria's book will be disappointed, not to say indignant, that she gives so little space, and spends so little sentiment, on this prime subject of the Alps and their glory.

With the exception of her account of the ascent of the "Monk," the companion-peak of the Jungfrau, and only two hundred and twenty feet less in altitude than its companion, — an ascent of extraordinary difficulty and danger, and never before attempted, if her statement may be trusted, — her account of mountain views and mountain climbing seems to us both meagre and forced. She was fortunate in her experience on Righi. The mists were accommodating; the sunrise was satisfactory; there was none of that "sullen and grim" vexation, tempest without and grumbling within, which is the memory that seven eighths of all eager gazers bring down from the Righi Culm; and no excuse, therefore, for any feeble description of the marvellous awakening of day upon that mountain. Yet the picture which the Countess gives seems to us rather mechanically drawn and conscientiously colored than palpitating with inspiration. She says as little as it is respectable to say, and is evidently glad to get down from that height to a mundane level and to more congenial human topics. The same remark is true of her descriptions of lake scenery. They are not picturesque, and they will satisfy neither those who have nor those who have not seen the fascinating sheets of blue water embosomed in their hills. The emotions which the Countess is constrained to express, if not to feel, as she meets in regular course these grand obstacles of scenery, remind one of the emotion of Dickens at the first view of Niagara, and his mature conviction that this emotion must have been one of — "Peace"!

The Countess D'Istria subordinates altogether this interest of the scenery of Switzerland to the higher interest of its annals. It is probable that to most English readers her work

(for it has been translated) will lend a new charm to this neglected portion of history. Comparatively few, we imagine, even among diligent readers, have paid much attention to the history of Helvetia. It has not yet been well written. It is a thing for the future. The man is yet to arise, who, bringing to this task scholarship, candor, industry, genius, and sympathy with the principle of freedom, shall make of Swiss history what it ought to be, a story as grand and far-reaching and inspiring as the views from those rugged and enduring mountains. Müller was great enough for the task, but he lived a century too soon, was seduced from his integrity as an historian by the blandishments of the German courts, found naturally more scope for his genius in a universal than in a merely national record, and has only left materials for some more loyal son of the land to recast and complete. Zschokke, the adopted child of Helvetia, was loyal enough, but did not bring to his historical effort that philosophical breadth and insight indispensable to a good history of such a land. He is an inimitable teller of small stories, but his history, faithful as it is to facts, and humane as it is in spirit, is little more than a detail of battles. The work of Vieusseux, published by Bohn, in 1846, full and comprehensive, has all the dryness of a compilation; it is a book to be referred to, but not to be read in course. Apart from this lack of worthy treatment, Swiss history is dwarfed in its interest by the narrowness of the theatre on which it passes. It seems to be all on a small scale. Its battles, as compared with those of the greater nations, are only affrays and skirmishes. Its wars are quarrels merely. Its policy seems hardly more imposing than the policy of tribes of Arabs. Still another reason why the history of Switzerland fails of interest lies in the character of those struggles by which it has maintained its place. Its wars are on so small a scale, that the terrible passions which have moved them manifest themselves the more painfully. We see continual fratricide in these contests of neighboring cities and neighboring Cantons. It is not so much nation against nation, race against race, as brother against brother. Hate, vengeance, jealousy, show themselves in these fraternal quarrels in their most malignant form.

It is the leading purpose of the Countess D'Istria's book to

vindicate this neglected history, — to exhibit its importance and its essential nobleness. She would show the principles which in past ages Switzerland has developed, and which it continues in the present age to represent more fully than any other European nation. In doing this she introduces some irrelevant matter, and presses some resemblances and analogies which seem to us doubtful and inapplicable. As a patriotic child of Wallachia, she would identify with Swiss freedom and the Swiss people the spirit and people of the Rouman race. Born in the communion of the Greek Church, she strives constantly to show that this Church is the friend of light and the foe of superstition, and to harmonize its dogmas and practice with the most liberal form of Protestant opinion. Her sympathies are with the Genevan Church; yet she holds tenaciously to the name of the Oriental hierarchy, and sees in its saints and doctors the prototypes of the modern martyrs for freedom and the modern champions of progress.

Her treatment of the Roman Church, too, is far from just. She omits no chance to expose its frailties, to berate its iniquities, to ridicule its legends, and to fasten upon it all the evils which have cursed the land and hindered its progress. In her eyes, Romanism is the gigantic wrong which blocks the path of all improvement, and hides in its shadow all the beauty of Europe. This tone is never mitigated, even when the facts which are treated would seem to dictate a different one. It is remarkable that a writer who can appreciate so fully the patriotism of the Swiss people, and see so clearly how this people represents the democratic idea, should fail to acknowledge the fact that it is precisely in the Catholic Cantons that patriotism is the most vivid, and democracy the purest. In those benighted regions around the Lake of Lucerne, where the peasantry frequent their ancient altars, confess sins to the parish priest, bow before images, and keep saints' days in joyous idleness, the spirit of ancient Helvetia survives most freshly; there is most love for vale and hill and forest, and most pride in the name of Switzer. Romanism there has certainly not extinguished the love of country.

Here we may remark that a great deal too much stress is laid by guide-books and tourists on the contrast in

Switzerland between the Protestant and Catholic Cantons. Differences there certainly are. As a whole, the Protestant Cantons are more enterprising, thrifty, and intelligent than the Catholic. The people in these Cantons are in better circumstances, the schools are more numerous, and there is possibly a higher morality. Yet these differences are owing quite as much to situation as to religious faith. The Catholic Cantons, mostly barricaded by mountains, are less favorably placed than the lower lands, within easy reach of a market. Where the natural opportunities are equal, there is no very notable inequality in the industrial or moral condition of the people. We distrust the ability of the most practised expert to tell, by the look of the man, a Catholic from a Protestant, in the Canton of the Grisons, where the two communions are mingled in about equal proportions. Two thirds of the people of St. Gall are Catholics, yet that Canton has as thriving an aspect as any in the land, — factories, rich farms, and a people who tell the truth.

Some of the dissertations with which the Countess D'Istria loads her pages, learned and eloquent as they are, seem out of place. In the whole of Switzerland, out of a population of nearly two millions and a half, the Jews number but little more than three thousand, and these mostly in the single Canton of Aargau. They are wholly without political influence, and have no share in that power which constrains the movements of the chief sovereigns of Europe. Yet the Countess has chosen to make these Jews a point of departure for an eloquent harangue about the origin, development, and humanizing influence of the Jewish religion; to criticise the theory of Salvador, that Jesus was fairly condemned; to vindicate, like Colani of Strasburg, the Pharisees as good patriots; to predict the future dissolution of the Jewish nationality, and the fusion of this race with other races; and to show how the various Jewish sects represent modern tendencies and systems. The Pharisees, in her view, are republicans; the Sadducees, monarchists; the Essenes, communists; and the Herodians, members of the foreign party, like the French *émigrés*, at the close of the last century! In religious opinion, the Pharisees represent Stoic spiritualism; the Sadducees,

Epicurean materialism ; the Essenes, mysticism ; and the Herodians, scepticism. All this is very pleasant to read, and quite ingeniously reasoned, but nevertheless is superfluous in a work of this kind.

Many of the interesting questions and curious peculiarities of Swiss history Madame D'Istria barely touches. There is the singular fact that the most patriotic nation in Europe, whose legends and proverbs are full of the love of country, should be the nation most ready to sell its services and to expatriate itself for gain. The taunt of the enemies of Switzerland is, that its sons are found in all the foreign armies,—that they guard the thrones of despots, and garrison the forts of the oppressors of freedom. You find them at the Tuileries, at the Vatican in half-harlequin attire, and in the barracks of St. Elmo. The most famous monument of modern art in the land, the Lion of Lucerne, is a tribute to the Swiss who fell in defending the effete monarchy of France. How is this mercenary spirit, this willingness to serve in the armies and courts of hostile nations, to be reconciled with a genuine patriotism? Why should they, whom a few notes of the “Ranz des Vaches” will send home deserters to their hills and herds, be willing to forsake their home for this base foreign dependence? Why, too, do educated men, men of science, prefer another land and another dialect? It is easier to ask than to answer this question, easier to lament than to deny the fact.

Then, too, there is the question of *race* ; not only that of the origin and descent of the Swiss people, a question complicated by the numerous invasions of barbarian tribes, but that of the equal union of the component races, Italian, Gothic, Teutonic, Celtic. In Switzerland there is difference of blood, but no dominant and no subject race ; nothing corresponding to the serf of Russia ; and no system of nobility. All the races, whatever their origin, have equal rights, yet without fusion. Now it is maintained by our modern political writers that this state of things is impossible. The Saxon and the Norman, they tell us, have equalized themselves only by amalgamation ; the Celt of Ireland can be lifted only by the same process. A separate race must either be subject

or dominant. Switzerland denies this position most emphatically. Its races are able to live harmoniously side by side, without amalgamation, yet without the compression of any form of despotism. In Austria the war of races is hindered only by the bayonets of the imperial army. The equality there is that of the beasts in a menagerie, compelled by chain and cage to refrain from tearing each other. In Canada, the French and English races consent to the same government, but the antipathy of blood guides the antagonism of parties, and there is a constant war of prejudice and of intrigue. But in Switzerland this consideration seems to enter but slightly into the movements of parties, and to be far from an influential cause of local hatreds.

The title of the Countess D'Istria's book suggests another interesting topic, which may perhaps be more fully discussed in the works which she intends hereafter to publish on "French" and "Italian" Switzerland. These terms, German, French, and Italian Switzerland, signify not so much difference of national character as difference of language. The nationality of all is the same. A citizen of Zurich would be as unwilling to admit that he was a German, as a citizen of Geneva to admit that he was a Frenchman; and the case is hardly less strong with the citizen of Sion, whose speech but slightly varies from the dialect of the neighboring Sardinia. All are as truly Swiss as the native of Coire, whose speech is more ancient and original than any of the rest. Switzerland is an instance of a country in which four separate languages continue to exist together without fusion, and in which there is no one national or aristocratic language. The Northern Cantons speak a dialect of German; the Western, a dialect of French; the Southern, a dialect of Italian; and in the Eastern, the curious Romanish still flourishes, with its schools, its newspapers, and its poets. Even three dialects of this last tongue may be distinguished. These four languages of Switzerland, it is true, are unequally divided, and if numbers were to decide the weight of influence, German might be called the language of Switzerland. More than two thirds of the people speak a Teutonic dialect. The French is the language of not more than half a million; the Italian, of less

than one hundred and fifty thousand; and the Romanish, of fifty thousand. Yet no one of these tongues has rights above the other. No one of them is reduced to a mere provincial dialect, which is expected in the course of time to die out and give way to the superior language. Each in its own place is a polite tongue, the language of the higher as much as of the lower classes. In each the laws are published, the Bible is read, and the news of the day circulated. Each has the right to a hearing in the assemblies of the Diet. This is a remarkable fact in the history of free assemblies. Would the Scotch Gaelic, or the Welsh Cymric, or the jargon of wild Connaught Celts, be tolerated in the debates of the English Parliament? The United States allow and protect a great variety of dialects; but only the English proper is recognized as the national speech, and it is expected that immigrants will conform to this, if they wish to hold office or to gain all the rights of citizenship. In Switzerland there is no such necessity. Here the possibility of a union of states and races in a strong nationality without a national language is distinctly proved.

Another thing which the Countess D'Istria perceives and rejoices in, is the steady development in the history of Switzerland of the democratic idea. Switzerland, in fact, may be said to preserve this idea in Europe. Switzerland has performed for democracy the service which the convents of the Dark Ages performed for the Bible, and from its central place and its mountain heights it holds up that theory of right before all the oppressed and despairing nations. So long as this people continues to exist united, prosperous, contented, without king or hereditary rulers or orders of nobility, to meet and debate in its primary assemblies, and to sit in grand council by its freely chosen delegates, the argument of those who deny that democracy is possible is nullified. It is easy to say that this democracy is on too small a scale to prove anything with regard to the larger nations; that it continues only through its impotence and insignificance, and by the tacit permission of the rival empires. Yet this does not render the fact of its existence less instructive and momentous. If the nation does not make show of great material

force, it retains a memory which the despots and oligarchs of Europe would fain crush out.

Do we pass over the struggles of Switzerland as insignificant because the theatre is so narrow, and smile at the enthusiasm which would make decisive battles of these mountain encounters? Let us remember that the battles of Switzerland have been won for freedom, while the great battles of Europe have resulted mostly in the overthrow of popular liberty. The Swiss wars have brought a steady and constant gain for freedom. Six centuries of strife in Germany have ended by virtually annihilating the idea of democratic government, and dividing the land between the houses of Hapsburg and Brandenburg. Six centuries of strife in Italy have destroyed all its proud republics, and left nothing of Venice, Genoa, Modena, and Florence but decaying palaces and a dishonored name. The wars of the Low Countries have given kings to the free burghers. The tyranny of Louis Napoleon is the commentary on the text of glory which French vanity has inscribed on the endless walls of the gallery of Versailles. The laboratory of a chemist is less interesting to visit than the great factory of a worker in iron. These small retorts and crucibles are insignificant to one who sees the huge engines, furnaces, and rollers, and the hundreds of swarthy operatives, in the lurid light of the roaring fires. But the retort or the crucible gives forth a nobler product, an unalloyed metallic base, a clear crystal, or an elixir of life, while the furnace and hammer and roller only forge chains and bars. The small fires of Swiss warfare have left their residuum in the pure gold of democracy, while the greater wars of the surrounding nations have only shaped and welded fetters and manacles for the toiling masses.

The democracy of Switzerland is remarkable as a progressive democracy, growing more and more stable, and more and more confident of its idea, as the fate of the other nations has seemed to deny the possibility of such a government. It has not been discouraged by the fortunes, more than it has been seduced by the theories, of the other nations. The land was never so democratic as it is to-day. Every school-boy of the last generation was drilled to repeat those sonorous lines of

Byron about the American Republic, preluded by that sad prophecy of the fate of Switzerland, —

“If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 't is but for a time;
For tyranny of late has cunning grown,
And in its own good season tramples down
The sparkles of our ashes.”

But what Byron feared has not yet come to pass, though half a century has intervened. The old thirteen Cantons have become twenty-two; and the last dependency, the Canton of Neuchatel, has recently thrown off tribute to her liege sovereign, and is as free as the rest. From three to eight, from eight to thirteen, and from thirteen to twenty-two, the progress of these small states has been one of steady enfranchisement. The *Bund* of these Cantons is as genuine as our own national league.

Our mention of the “Bund” leads us to remark that Switzerland illustrates the possibility of a purely federative republic, so often denied by political writers. This assembly of commonwealths gets along very well without a President, without an official organ, and without an army of national office-holders. The need of an individual head to strengthen their union, and to bind their interests, is not felt. The Diet suffices; nor are there any considerable number who wish even for a ruler of their own choosing. This jealousy of individual power is one of the healthy symptoms of Swiss democracy. A people who are afraid of governors will not easily part with their liberties. It is the fashion of English writers to represent the Swiss *Landsgemeinde* and the Swiss Diet as a miserable set of intriguers, liars, and rogues, and the whole system as one of strife, corruption, and the ambitious scheming of individuals to gain ascendancy. But it is a singular fact that the people cling to these corrupt machines, and that the ambitious schemes of individuals so rarely succeed. The separate sets of wheels, which ought, according to the theory of these writers, to be getting continually out of gear and playing against one another, in some mysterious way turn out good work, and the people are satisfied with them, and have no wish to substitute the blessings of Red Tape, the Circumlocution Office, and the Court of Chancery.

Again, democracy and rationalism are usually supposed to be close and necessary allies. It is said to be impracticable to preserve liberty where superstition exists; free institutions naturally discard signs and wonders and foolish legends. Yet no land is more tenacious of its popular legends than Switzerland, and the influence of these is strongest in the most democratic sections. Some of these legends are very ancient, inherited from the days of the Pagans and the Druids. The mythology of the Fauns and Dryads lives among the mountaineers of the High Alps. As the Arabs of the Kidron valley insist that a dragon hides in the fountain of Siloam beneath Mount Moriah, and controls the flow of its waters, so the peasants of Ragatz imagine that the old baths of Pfeffers conceal a demon, and dread at certain hours and seasons to encounter his hot breath in that dreadful mountain cleft. Dwarfs and giants are articles of the popular creed, especially the former. The part which these pigmies play in the domestic and social economy is sometimes malevolent, but oftener friendly and cheerful. They dwell through the winter months in the caverns of the mountains, in the crevasses of the glaciers, in the inaccessible gorges, coming forth in the spring to assist the farmers, wood-cutters, and hunters, and to mingle in the sports of the people. The chamois are their flocks. Madame D'Istra discovers in the dwarf-stories in which the Bernese Oberland abounds, and of which she relates several, the distinctive characteristics of the Swiss people. We may give as a specimen the story of the Gutbrunnen shepherd.

“One evening the *fochu* (a tempest peculiar to Switzerland) was raging in the Alps. A shepherd and his wife, sheltered in their cabin, listened with terror to the wind which shook the heavy stones laid upon the roof of their *chalet* to protect it against storms. The good people were pitying those who were perhaps caught unawares by the tempest on some of the distant paths. All at once, in the blue glow of the lightning, they see through their window a poor dwarf hurried along on the steep path by torrents of mud and rain, which threatened to submerge his meagre little body. They would readily have called him in and offered him a place at their hearth, but the instinctive terror which the apparition of a supernatural being produced, chained their tongues. While they were deliberating, three light blows were heard upon the

thick green glass of the window. The shepherd hastened to open to the dwarf, who shivered with cold, and whose long cloak (the long cloak is the classical costume of the dwarfs) was streaming with rain. Gradually our good people became calmer, though all the time a little frightened; the sense of the duty of hospitality prevailed, and their behavior was satisfactory. The dwarf showed himself the more grateful for this good reception, as he had just been refused admittance at more than one door by the hard-hearted people of the village. He seemed therefore very much touched by the good offices of his hosts, although he did very little honor to the coarse repast which they served to him. For the dwarf, without being a Lucullus, is accustomed to a more delicate fare than that of shepherds. A sort of tenderness gradually came into the intercourse; the dwarf made them love him by his cordiality, and appeared to forget completely his superior nature, his vast palaces hewn in the heart of the rock, his numerous flocks of graceful chamois, his supernatural knowledge and his prophetic gift. In vain they tried to make him tarry. Dwarfs are very busy. He had work, he said, on the mountain.

“The next day came a storm more furious than the first. The pines cracked with a frightful sound; the Alpine echoes repeated the heavy roar of the thunder; unchained torrents, whirling along the loose rocks, dashed themselves against the village and on the fields. The shepherd and his wife believed themselves lost, when they saw the dwarf, who was coming down on the torrent mounted in triumph on a great block of stone, stop this before their cottage, and hold it there as a rampart against the fury of the waters. As to the pitiless villagers who had shut their doors against him, they all perished in the tempest.”

Not less quaint and curious than these stories of the dwarfs are the legends of the Christian saints, running back to the earliest propagation of the Gospel in the land. The story of St. George and the Dragon has its Swiss version, with a few variations. The Devil and St. Beatus is a story which every boatman on the Lake of Thun knows how to tell. The life of this famous saint, though not admitted into the authentic compilations of the Church, has yet been drawn out by the Canon Murer of Lucerne, in the “*Paradisus Sanctorum Helvetiæ Florum*.” We are informed that he was a native of Britain, a convert from Druidism, a pupil of Barnabas, and especially commissioned by St. Peter to convert the Helvetians and win for Christ that most desirable land and that proud race of men.

Redundant miracles attended his preaching. He journeyed on the lake without a boat, buoyed up by his miraculous cloak, impervious to water and woven by angels. His embarkation was the signal for storms to subside. His dwelling was a cavern in a cliff of the mountain, the former home of a dragon, whom he expelled with the sign of the cross. The cascade which still drops from that cave is in popular belief the flow of a fountain which the saint opened eighteen hundred years ago. The adventure of this holy man with the Devil was on this wise. Achates, the companion of Beatus, had charge of a church of converted idolaters on the other shore of the lake. One Easter day Beatus went on his miraculous cloak to join in the service; but arriving a little late, and finding the temple full of worshippers, he was afraid of interrupting the sermon, and sat down on one of the farthest seats. The heat was intense, the audience dull, and the good saint was scandalized at seeing all the members of the congregation gradually fall asleep, one after another. While he was sadly musing on this culpable indifference, he spied Satan under the pulpit,—horns, tusks, claws, and all,—his left foot on his right knee, a crow-quill in his hand, busily writing down on a skin the names of the unlucky sleepers, who were thus unconsciously endangering the salvation of their souls. Anxious as he was to wake them, he feared to commit the mortal sin of interrupting the sermon. The Devil kept on writing, filled his register full, and had more names yet which he had not room to put down. He then tried to stretch the skin on which he was writing and get more room, pulling it with his teeth and claws; but in his Satanic zeal he pulled so hard that he knocked his head against the pulpit. At this mishap Beatus could not contain himself. He burst out laughing; the laugh waked up the people, and they all had time to say *Amen* to the sermon. The Devil was foiled, and took himself off. But Beatus lost his boat, for the magic property of his cloak was now abstracted, to punish him for interrupting public worship. That laugh saved the people, but it compelled the saint to go on foot ever after. He lived, says the legend, to the age of ninety.

This curious story of St. Beatus is only the most ancient of the sacred legends which linger in the Alps. Other hermits

have left far more respectable memorials. The Abbot Gallus, who came from Iona in the seventh century, taught the tribes around the Lake of Constance how to plough and sow, as well as how to read and pray. He not only exterminated the wild beasts of the thickets, but tamed the passions of the savages, and made of that region a centre of light in the Dark Ages. From the manuscript treasures of the convent which he founded modern learning has drawn large supplies. The shrine of St. Columbanus, near the head of the St. Gothard pass, is more than a sign of superstition; it is a tribute to a really noble benefactor of the land. The Swiss saints are mostly patriots, and a merely anchorite life hardly entitles one in this land to popular reverence. Nicholas von der Flue, the pious hermit, who in 1481 made peace between the wrangling confederates, for that noble service fairly shares the honor paid to St. Beatus. In the homes of Unterwalden and Schwytz they love to tell of his charities. In the council-houses of Sarnen and Stanz, the free citizens wonder at the rude pictures of this holy man, and the parish church of Sachslen has the dreadful treasure of his skeleton, the bones hung with votive offerings, and the place of the heart supplied by a jewelled cross.

By far the most remarkable memorial of the ancient superstitions in Switzerland is the Abbey of Einsiedeln, in the Canton of Schwytz. While most of the convents in the German section of the land have disappeared, or their buildings have been transferred to other uses, this still retains its sanctity and its attraction. After repeated burnings, its walls have risen in larger magnificence, and the immense wealth which it has relinquished to plunderers has not yet made it poor. The annual number of pilgrims is on the average one hundred and fifty thousand. From fifty to a hundred monks dwell within its walls. The origin of the convent is obscure, and very few of those who go to worship the little black and ugly Madonna, which stands in its marble shrine near the door of the church, have any idea how it came there. They only believe in its powerful protection, remember how it caused the heretics to fall, how it has healed diseases, and how it has brought to their land a marvellous gain in traffic, as well as in the favor of the Virgin. Indeed, half the industry of Schwytz

goes to supply the wants of this village of inns and dram-shops. Einsiedeln is a monastery, surrounded almost wholly by public houses, to the number at least of fourscore; and few of the visitors escape, in their stay before the sacred walls, other intoxication than that of pious rapture.

If the Protestants of Switzerland reject these legends and slight these shrines of the ancient Church, they show hardly less zeal in their regard for the memory of the Reformers. They make pilgrimages to Wildhaus, a little village in the mountains beyond Appenzell, to see the old cottage where Zwingli was born. No altar could be more religiously cared for. Under the church-tower at Sennwald in the Grisons is shown, in a coffin with a glass lid, the dried body of a Protestant soldier of the baronial house of Hohen Sax, who, after escaping from the massacre at Paris, was murdered by his nephew in his native land; and the story is frequently told in their churches of the curse of God which came upon the family of the murderers for their crime, and how the Romanists once stole these venerable relics, knowing them to be more potent than the bodies of their own false saints. To match the reverence which the Catholics of Soleure pay at the chapel of St. Verena, where the finger-prints of the young maiden still remain in the rock, showing how desperately she resisted the Devil, who sought to carry her off, the Protestants of Berne go out to the tomb of Madame Langhaus at Hindelbank, to wonder at the sculpture of Nahl, which presents the mother and child rising to glory, and to read the epitaph which Haller wrote. In the museums, the autographs of the Reformers are prized as highly as the bones of the saints in the churches; and the story of the holy wars is handed down from one generation to another in the families of the peasantry, as that of Brian Boru and of Cromwell and his troopers in the nursery tales of Ireland.

Equally remarkable with the prevalence of this superstitious regard for names, places, saints, and supernatural beings in so democratic a land, is the fact that in Switzerland there is a sort of hereditary aristocracy of learning. Science and scholarship in theology, in medicine, in philosophy, are handed down from father to son through many generations.

The first Buxtorf was but the patriarch of a long line of descendants, who for more than two centuries occupied and glorified the field of Hebrew letters. Five of the family of Wetstein have made that name illustrious in Biblical scholarship. The history of mathematics records no instance like that of the Bernouilli family, no less than eight of whom attained to the highest European celebrity. The four sons of Euler sustained well by their acquirements and labors the honorable name which their father gave them. Facts like these quite refute the notion, that in a popular government genius cannot be transmitted by race, and that the sunshine and privilege of aristocratic society and patronage are needed to foster it. No despotic land can show a parallel to these instances, and even constitutional England can rarely boast of more than two generations of learned men in the same family. Newton founded no dynasty. Bacon left no race to pursue his opened way to knowledge. And it is chronicled as a singular circumstance, that two first-class statesmen should bear the name of Pitt, and two great astronomers belong to the family of Herschel. Such cases as these are the rule, rather than the exception, in the little republic of Switzerland.

This leads us to allude to the distinguished part which Switzerland has borne in the progress of ideas in religion, education, moral reform, and practical science. The pioneers of the Reformation, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, were martyred on its soil; and it claims as its own the confessors of whom recreant Bohemia is not worthy. Before Luther nailed the theses on the doors of the Wittenberg church, young Zwingli had preached at Einsiedeln and Zurich against the assumptions of the priesthood, and the false dogmas which kept the masses in fear. It was the alliance of the hierarchy with arbitrary power which first aroused the Swiss Reformation. Even Catholic Lucerne took part in that movement which led Berne and Zurich to expel from their boundaries the man-stealers, the "dealers in slaves," as they called the men who coaxed, bribed, or hired the sons of Switzerland to serve in the armies of foreign kings. Zwingli, in his preaching, was more consistent and radical than the German

monk. He saw the extent of his principles, and he was willing to go as far as he saw. Protestants are but just beginning to do justice to the man who, of all the Reformers, was most honest, most unselfish, and most humane. In his controversies, he had the advantage of his opponents as well in reason as in taste and temper. His views upon faith, upon the Eucharist, and upon the Scriptures, were those which the majority of Protestants now prefer to the views of Luther; and the countrymen of Zwingli were far more ready to adopt his radical opinions, than to stop with the Lutheran compromises. From the Reformation to our own day, the progress of religious ideas in Switzerland has been steady, healthy, and free from those oscillations and extravagances which have marked the religious history of France and Germany. The Catholic Church has been growing more liberal, until Jesuitism is fairly driven out from its former strong-holds. Genevan Orthodoxy has become less rigid. The faith of Servetus is now preached from the pulpit of Calvin, and the magistrates listen. Switzerland offers a home to any who are persecuted for conscience' sake. De Wette, the rationalist critic, banished from Prussia for the crime of visiting a friend in prison and preparing him for his fate, finds a welcome in the city which protected Erasmus three centuries before. Strauss, the daring theologian of Tübingen, is invited by the council of the Zurich University to teach theology where Lavater preached so recently the doctrines of the Reformed Confession. This hospitality to heretics, however, does not imply a general sympathy with rationalist ideas. These men are welcomed because they are exiled, not because they hold and teach eccentric opinions. The Swiss as a people are practical and positive, not easily interested in speculations or captivated by neology. Socialism is not agreeable to them; nor is their long-established democracy of a kind to fraternize with the wild theories of the Parisian communists, or the Red Republicanism of the Italian patriots. The Protestantism of Switzerland is evangelical, while it is liberal; and it holds fast to the old landmarks of faith, while they stand, though it has no fear of any scrutiny of their foundations. The preaching in the churches of Switzerland to-day, not only in Geneva, but in the cities less openly

liberal, represents fairly, as we have heard it, the average sentiment of the pulpit of Boston. If Switzerland be not in the van of theological speculation in Europe, it is certainly in the van of reasonable religious liberty. If its universities do not startle the world by their theories, neither do they shame truth by reactionary tendencies and concessions to power, as some in Germany have done. All that is gained is held.

The services, too, which Switzerland has rendered to the cause of popular education, cannot be estimated too highly. The chapter which the Countess D'Istria devotes to the undertakings of Pestalozzi is one of the best in her book, though too short for the theme. The name of Pestalozzi is one which all philanthropists delight to honor. If he failed as a practical teacher, the idea which he proclaimed and sought to realize was accepted as a revelation, and now no other theory of education is defended in any free land. This native of Zurich it was who called men to see that education is not merely a communication of knowledge from without, or a process of drill, but a development of native faculties, a drawing out of the soul's powers, — the process of teaching one to think for himself, to investigate, and to acquire. He it was who announced the strange theory that the children of the poor have the same right to education with those of the rich, that knowledge is as good and as natural for the peasant as for the prince, and that it is safer to instruct the lower classes than to keep them in ignorance. The Orphan Houses of Europe and America are responses to this assertion; and the stately walls of such a foundation as Girard College, sustained by public sympathy no less than by private munificence, repeat the experiment of the farm at Neuhof which the authorities of Switzerland refused to sanction. The school in that old castle at Yverdun was the first normal school of this century, — a normal school not only for Switzerland, but for all Europe. And it is safe to say, that no romance of the last or the present century, however much read, has had such influence in the determination of public policy, as the obscure romance of "Leonard and Gertrude," in which Pestalozzi first published his schemes to the world. The book has passed out of knowledge; but the ideas are repeated in countless speeches, ser-

mons, articles, and discussions in every Protestant nation. Switzerland did not originate the common school; but it was reserved for Switzerland, that ignorant and benighted land, as it is called by English tourists, to show the world what common schools ought to be, and to proclaim the wide scope of their beautiful idea. The tomb of Pestalozzi is rightly constructed in the form of a temple.

Hardly less honorable than the name of Pestalozzi is that of Fellenberg, the Swiss agricultural teacher. His experiment at Hofwyl, commenced sixty years ago, suggested what has passed into a settled practical conviction, that agriculture and science assist each other, that knowledge helps the farmer as much as the preacher, and that this earliest profession of the human race may be taught as an art, and relieved from its disgrace of mere servile drudgery. The quaking morass which he reclaimed proved to sceptics that his theories were not chimerical, and that scientific farming is better than the mere routine of tradition. Now in foreign universities there are chairs of agriculture; "farm schools" are not merely penal colonies; rich men bequeath their estates for the education of tillers of the soil; the force of invention is applied to agricultural improvements; and the machines for planting and ploughing, mowing and reaping, the hundred agricultural newspapers, and the pedestrian tours which young men take, to observe soils and woods and the growth of crops, are the issue of the farmers' school which the Bernese enthusiast founded.

To these names posterity will doubtless add the name of Guggenbühl, whose school for idiots on the Abendberg is well worth the ascent from Interlachen. No country suffers so much from the frightful disease of *cretinism* as Switzerland. To restore this class to reason is one of those labors which require a patience and skill almost superhuman. Dr. Guggenbühl, if he shall succeed in his enterprise, will entitle himself to a reverence greater than that which St. Beatus holds in the region of Unterseen. His miracles will be more authentic and to better purpose. The idiot has not the same public honor in Switzerland that is paid in Moslem lands to the half-witted dervish. Rather is he treated, like the lepers

at Zion's gate, as a nuisance and an encumbrance, whose death will be relief, as his form and features are ever repulsive.

Small as Switzerland is, it contains probably a larger proportion of the marvels of practical science, the triumphs of engineering, than any other land. One who would see to what perfection road-making can be brought, must study it in the grades and curves, the galleries and tunnels, of the three great highways of the Simplon, the St. Gothard, and the Splügen. The whole of America has no avenue, even on the plain, which can be compared for evenness, solidity, durability, or beauty, to either of these mountain roads. The traveller who passes along them finds his awe at the wild and wonderful scenery divided by his amazement at the equal wonder of these grand constructions. The successful building of these roads has been the ground of assurance to the later railways in their mountain lines; but the passage of the Via Mala by an even carriage-road is, to the eye at least, an engineering feat which no railway has equalled. In bridge-building, too, Switzerland exhibits masterpieces. Among all the curiosities of Berne, — its minster portal, its curious clock-tower, from which puppet-bears come out in procession, its lines of quaint arcades, its archæological and zoölogical museum, its magnificent hospital, its vast prison, and the Alpine panorama displayed before its platform, — nothing is so admirable as the bridge which spans the Aar, and brings the once inaccessible promontory to a level with the surrounding country. This bridge of three arches only, the central one being a hundred and fifty feet wide, is nearly a quarter of a mile in length. The suspension bridges at Freyburg are even more extraordinary, as marvels of lightness, grace, and strength. Every workman upon the bridge of the Sarine, the longest finished suspension bridge in the world, was a native of Switzerland, and only one of them had ever before seen a work of the kind. All the material, wood, stone, and iron, was produced by the land itself. After twenty-five years of constant use, that bridge remains as firm as on the day of its opening. In the bridge over the Gotteron, the ingenious construction is still more remarkable, the native

rock being made the substitute for artificial piers, and the chains bolted directly to the sides of the cliff.

To such works of practical science as these we might add the terraces, staircases, and constructions to ward off avalanches, which have from time to time been erected in the mountain regions. These are all monuments of native skill and enterprise. Switzerland has borrowed but little foreign capital to complete these splendid achievements. They belong to the soil, and every citizen feels that he has a right in them,—as much as he has in the rivers which they defy or the hills which they conquer. They are the tokens that he has subdued his savage land to obedience. The other nations of Europe show the triumphs of engineering in forts, walls, and dockyards, the defences of royalty. The Switzer shows them in the works which secure freedom, facilitate movement, release the walled cities and castles from their isolation, and bind the various parts of the land to one another. These roads and bridges are guaranties of union. The Splügen is the spinal column of the Canton of the Grisons; the St. Gothard is the ligature between German and Italian Switzerland, which allows a common flow to the twin currents of their national life; and so long as the Simplon shall endure, the Catholic of the Valais will feel himself a brother to the heretic of Geneva.

In the history of Art, as that term is usually applied, Switzerland has certainly not a great deal to boast. Its architecture, whether of cathedral, castle, or cottage, is not usually striking, and those pleasant toys which travellers bring away are very flattering counterfeits of the homes of the peasantry. The tastes of the people do not encourage the collection of great galleries of paintings, or the erection of costly and imposing piles for church or palace. The Art of the land is democratic, and is manifested chiefly in works of a homely and practical kind. The artistic genius of Switzerland is represented by Holbein, and in the numerous "Dances of Death," which were painted on church windows and on the walls of cemeteries, and hung upon the covering of bridges,—works of a grotesque, plebeian, and iconoclastic character. Yet in landscape painting Switzerland has con-

tributed a full share to European art. Solomon Gessner, John Gaspard Füssli, and Louis Hess produced works of permanent value in this department. The Countess D'Istria seems to think that the living painters of Switzerland will compare favorably with those of any nation. "What names," exclaims she, in a transport of admiration, "more distinguished than those of the Calames, of the Roberts, Leopold and Aurelius, of the Lugardons, the Girardets, the Hornungs, the Grosclaudes, the Gleyres? Every day the canvas of these painters shows to all Europe, that the arts have no more need than has science of the protection of absolute monarchs, and that free institutions favor every kind of progress in genius and human intelligence." We may be excused for confessing our own ignorance of some of these names, and for believing that their fame is rather provincial than cosmopolitan. The evidence afforded by Swiss art, whether in the past or the present, seems to us not ample enough to warrant the defiant boast of the Countess. The great historic scenes of Switzerland, not less than its magnificent landscapes, are left mainly to foreign artists. It is the German Lessing who has glorified the trial and the death of Huss upon the canvas, and Switzerland owns, so far as we know, no respectable portrait of this martyr. The bust of Lavater is by the German Dannecker; and the Dane Thorwaldsen was hired to carve the sleeping lion on the rock of Lucerne. The popular taste shows itself, we must sadly admit, in those fearful daubs at Altdorf and Stanz, which consecrate the exploit of Tell and the frantic oath of the three confederates. German Switzerland is poor in art-treasures. With the exception of a few private collections in Bâle, it has very little painting or sculpture worthy of mention.

If there are few eminent Swiss painters, there is no lack of eminent Swiss poets. If Haller, of Berne, were not known as one of the great lights of modern science, his poetic merits would have more honor. He belonged by intellect, by insight, and by the variety of his knowledge, to the same order of minds as Bacon and Goethe; but his comprehensive genius could not smother the fire of his patriotism. His verses, like those of our own Whittier, are consecrated to the cause of

freedom and of his native land. He wrote in the High-German tongue, and not like the editors of the later *Alpenrosen*, in the provincial *patois*. His Elegy on the Death of his Wife, of which the Countess D'Istria gives a French prose translation, is surpassed by no German poem. His friend Gessner, of Zurich, was hardly his inferior in this divine art. The verses of John von Salis, sometime captain of the Swiss Guard at Versailles, have all the fancy of Moore, all the melancholy of Cowper, and all the ring of Campbell's pride of country. Who does not know by heart that beautiful "Song of the Silent Land," as it has been rendered by Longfellow? Kuhn, Usteri, Wyss, Meissner, Häffliger, and Gluta, are less known beyond the borders of their land; but their own countrymen are eloquent in their praise. These scholars and pastors, writing in the dialect of the people, writing about the national hopes and sufferings, about the natural and historic glories of the land, have won a place in the heart of the nation which needs no voice from abroad to confirm it. Usteri is the Burns of Switzerland; and these contemporaries, the merchant of Zurich and gauger of Dumfries, have in their lives, as in their verse, many points of resemblance.

If Switzerland has in Usteri its Burns, it has in Bitzius its Scott. In number, in variety, in exquisite pictures of scenery and manners, in sympathy with the joys and woes of his brethren, the romances of the Swiss vicar fall but little behind those of the Wizard of the North. They want only that historical pomp which accompanies the stories of Scott. They are pictures of still life, of domestic love, of simple virtues and primitive purity. They are thoroughly national, and can no more be translated than the works of Dickens. The "Tales" of Zschokke, on the other hand, have a European reputation, which those of Töpfer, of Geneva, are fast approaching. Switzerland, indeed, is a land of story-tellers, who keep, by their inventions, the democratic fires alive. In the hundred or more newspapers published within its borders, a considerable space is given to fictions which connect the life of the people with its legends, and interpret the meaning of the lake, and mountain, and glacier. Nearly all these stories have a political bearing, and though many of them favor

order, and oppose radicalism, none of them teach the dogmas of arbitrary power.

The light literature, too, of Switzerland, has encouragement, and the democratic spirit finds support in the very numerous societies and clubs which bring the people together. We are surprised that the Countess D'Istria has failed to notice this interesting feature of Swiss social life. If book-shops are less frequent in the Swiss than in the German cities, reading societies abound. There are societies for the diffusion of useful knowledge; travelling lyceums, which go from city to city and from Canton to Canton; lodges of various kinds, literary and scientific;—all self-supporting and indifferent to government patronage. These lodges and clubs, not less than the military clubs and the unions of "sharp-shooters," include, in one way or another, most of the young and middle-aged men of the better class in the land. Some of them have fine libraries and cabinets. Benevolent societies, moreover, keep full pace with these literary societies; and the treatment of prison discipline, pauperism, and vagrancy, by associated action, is as common in Switzerland as in New England.

The Countess D'Istria discreetly glides over the subject of Swiss *music*. That is a sore point for a critic to touch. It is impossible for an educated musical ear to enjoy that hollow falsetto, that noisy imitation of echoes, which makes the characteristic idea of Swiss melody. We know that Swiss Families, and Swiss Bell-Ringers, have secured in their wanderings over land and sea a wide popularity, and that every one supposes the Switzer to be a natural singer; but we have not found evidence in the land itself that the soul of music has adequate expression. The great organ of Aloys Moser discourses in the Freyburg Cathedral such unearthly harmonies,—such thunders and whispers of the mystic world,—as no organ in the world may reach; yet the music which flows from its opened valves is not that which delights the ears of the people, or which was arranged by native composers. There is no science which can adjust to grand measures the famous "Ranz des Vaches," or make of it such a national anthem as the "Marseillaise" of France, or the "God save the King" of England. The strain here is but little more

dignified than the American national air, which patriotism may rejoice in, but music utterly rejects.

Many other topics might be added in proof of the rich material which Switzerland offers to a discriminating and competent writer. We might instance the shelter which it has given to the oppressed of all nations, from Arnold of Brescia to the refugees of the last revolution. We might dwell upon the fact, that this free republic can sustain its freedom without standing armies, either in the separate Cantons or in the federal union; that it is a nation of soldiers, ready to come forth at a moment's warning, yet without the annoyances of camp or garrison. We might refer to the war of the Sonderbund, which broke the last hope of despotism in the land. We might catalogue the names of the preachers, physicians, and naturalists who have illustrated this country at foreign courts and in foreign universities, — such names as Bodmer and Breitingen, Zimmerman and Zollikofer, Guyot and Agassiz. We might speak of those efforts of the Protestant "Propaganda" which have gone out from the Mission House at Bâle. We confidently repeat, in conclusion, that the history of Switzerland, when written as it ought to be, will be the great work of modern literature. This land has been chosen by many as the retreat of learned leisure, or as the fit retirement in which the history of other countries might be mastered. Gibbon wrote on the banks of Lake Lemman, in sight of the snowy Alps, the story of the Decline and Fall of Rome. In another age, some peer of Gibbon shall tell, from some similar home in this paradise of beauty, the story of the land which before his eyes has transmitted the freedom of departed Rome, and given the elements of growth and strength to the coming generations.